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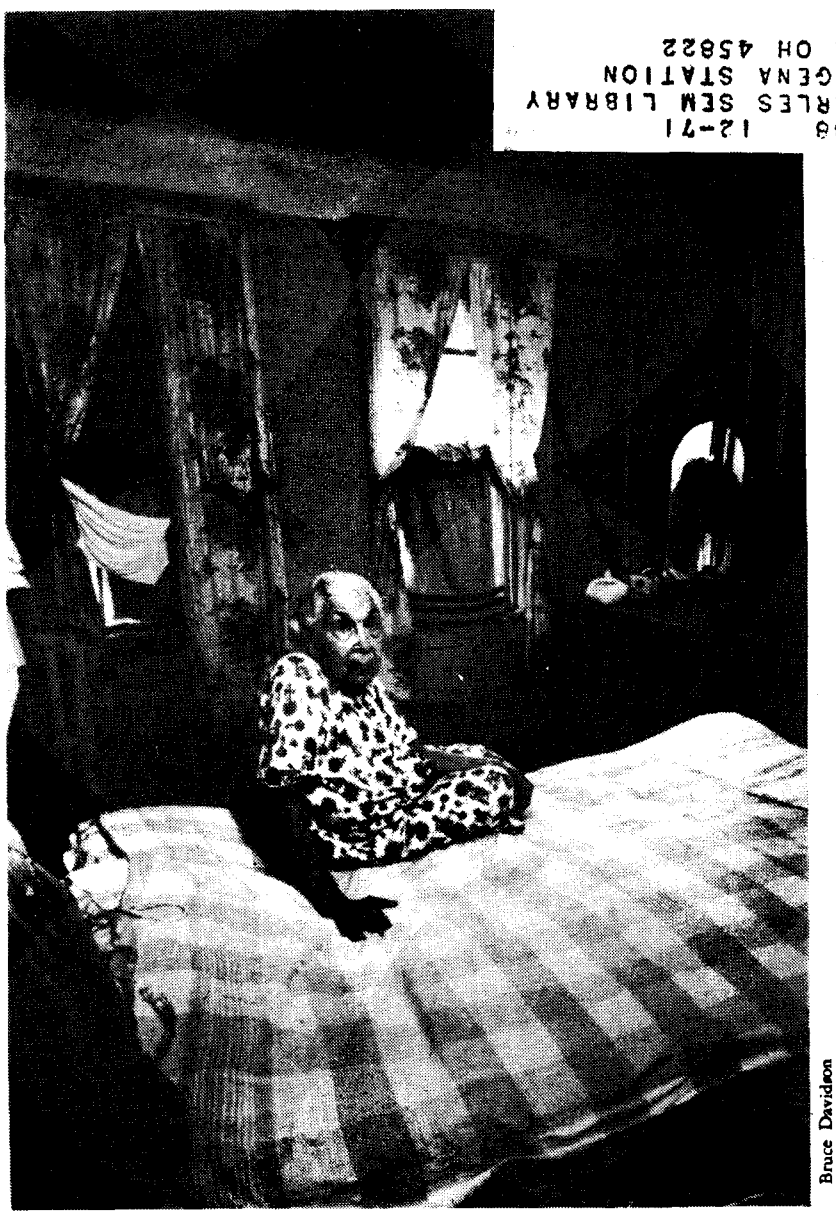

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Is Poverty Illegal?

ISIDORE SILVER

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NEWS & VIEWS

The More Things Change . . .

The Johnson era might not be so dead as we believed. John Connally resurrects as Nixon's nominee to be Secretary of the Treasury. Now *Newsweek* reincarnates George Ball, William Bundy and Zbigniew Brzezinski, and will rotate them as foreign-affairs columnists.

The Ball-Bundy-Brzezinski reunion makes it old home week at 444 Madison. Ball was Johnson's Under Secretary of State; Bundy, Johnson's Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific affairs; Brzezinski, a member of the State Department's Policy Planning Council during the Johnson Administration.

Color the whole thing establishment—which hardly seems the shade for a weekly newsmagazine which must reach for a broadly-based audience.

It especially isn't the shade when there are possibilities on the Left, like Marcus Raskin, Hans Morgenthau and Richard J. Barnett (let alone Noam Chomsky), and on the Right, like Joseph Alsop, Robert Conquest (why not an Englishman?), and, and, and —there must be others.

Parole Denied

The U.S. Board of Parole recently denied parole to artist Tom Lewis of the Baltimore 4-Catonsville 9, and in Tom's mind there is no question: he was denied parole because he plans to continue to protest through his art.

It is impossible to nail that down, as parole boards do not give reasons for their decisions. Tom's denial may be another of the routine parole denials that have been the lot of his anti-war colleagues.

But he sees it another way. "I was denied parole after telling the board that if paroled I would continue to portray, expose and protest war, racism and injustices in this society and culture. I would do this through my art work," Tom declares in a communication.

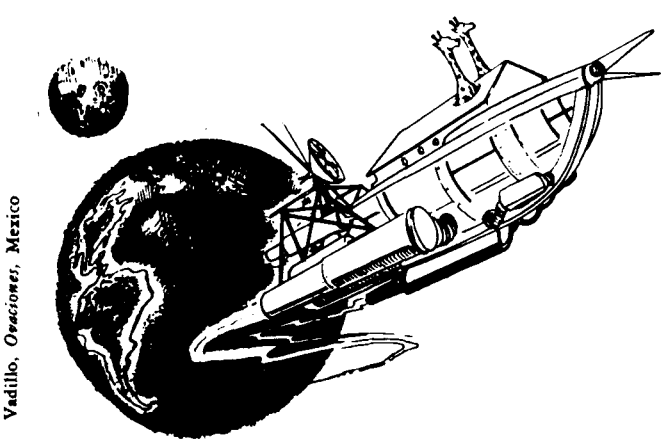
Lewis, who is co-author with Daniel Berrigan of *Trial Poems* (Beacon Press; $17.50), is eligible to reapply for parole in July. If he doesn't make it then, he will "max" out in September. He is serving his term at Lewisburg.

The Berrigan Issue

The idea of a special Berrigan issue was a natural, in a way, for the *Holy Cross Quarterly* — Dan being a Jesuit and Phil a Holy Cross alumnus. But it was a gutsy idea to follow through on, given the heavy conservative constituency of the alumni among whom the *Quarterly* circulates.

Father William Van Etten Casey, originator and editor of the project, probably hasn't boosted the alumni fund much, but he's boosted enormously the college's reputation for intellectual courage about confronting sensitive issues. The *Quarterly* is the most thorough thing done to date on the priest-brothers.

Copies are available at $1.95 from the Holy Cross College Bookstore, Holy Cross College, Worcester, Mass., 01610.



Vadillo, *Oraciones*, Mexico

The Perfect Squelch

Tom Cornell titles his reflection in the *Catholic Peace Fellowship Bulletin* "A Matter of Life Style":

One never really leaves the Catholic Worker. If ever it has been home it is always home. Catholic Worker poverty is a most liberating experience. All this was going through my mind as I sat here gazing out the window of 339 Lafayette a few days ago. Autumn in New York, even with the air pollution, sheds a certain light on the tenements and streets so that even the decay, the litter, the wine bottles are less noticeable, and the laundry lines, the open air markets and the permanent pushcarts loaded with fruits and vegetables take on a new freshness. Our window looks down upon the northern end of Mulberry Street in the old Italian neighborhood that for so long was the home of the Catholic Worker. Chinatown is just below. The impoverished gourmet's delight. And just a few blocks to the east there are the Jews, Nova Scotia lox, bagels and bialies, herring. And they say we are poor! Then the telephone rang.

"Mr. Cornell?"

"Yes."

"Mr. Cornell, my name is Ted Snyder, and I'm with Metropolitan Life Insurance. We have a policy, a new policy, for people in just your circumstances."

"Yes?" (Unstated, how do you know my circumstances?)

"Yes, it's a savings, annuity and life insurance policy."

"Yes?"

"You live in Brooklyn, don't you? Crown Heights?

"Yes."

"Carroll Street, isn't it?"

"Yes."

"I have a number of clients in your neighborhood, Mr. Cornell, and I'm going to be over there tonight. May I drop in on you and Mrs. Cornell to talk over this new savings plan with you?"

"I'd rather you didn't."

"What? Aren't you interested in saving?"

"Consider the lilies of the field."

"But we have to think of tomorrow?"

"Think not on the morrow."

"But we all have to plan for the future, and provide for those contingencies that might arise."

"Mr. Snyder, my wife and I have dedicated our lives to work toward a communitarian future in which insurance policies and insurance companies will be irrelevant!"

"Geez, that's weird!"

Odds and Ends

—Dan Berrigan's play, *The Trial of the Catonsville 9*, opened in New York Feb. 7 with $10,000 worth of tickets being underwritten by the Theatre Development Fund. The Fund is a non-profit organization which provides financial assistance to worthwhile commercial ventures by purchasing tickets and distributing them to groups and individuals. Box-office prices for *The Trial* range to $7.95.

—*The New Yorker* terms the U.S.-South Vietnamese scheme to deport people of the five northernmost provinces to the South a "totalitarian act," the closest precedent for which may be the deportations to Siberia in the '30s. Says *The New Yorker*, it is as though the Chinese undertook a project deporting the entire population of New England to the Southwest, destroying all the cities and towns, defoliating the landscape, and shooting all the people who refused to leave or who hid in the woods.

JOHN DEEDY

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CORRESPONDENCE

What Is a Priest?

Evanston, Ill.

To the Editors: I wish the article on anonymous priesthood [Dec. 11] had specified what exactly the author meant by "priestly work." If he stands by the Scriptural designation of offering sacrifices, then it's difficult to see how anyone can be singled out as a "priest" without further formalities. If, on the other hand, priestly work is broadened to its furthest extent, which is probably what the author meant, then the judgment about priests who do not do their work in the parish is not so easily come by, except in extreme cases. But even in such extremes, does not the severe judgment itself point to something distinctive marked out by—what else but explicit (hence ritualized) designation?

BENJAMIN S. LLAMZON

Petoskey, Mich.

To the Editors: I greatly enjoyed Father Glaser's article [Dec. 11], about Spirit ordination. However, it seems to me that his theory is only a halfway step to the real question that must be faced —the call of Christ to all Christians to be priests.

The theory of the last several hundred years in the Catholic church, of course, has been that priesthood is a magical thing given by the bishop to certain men and that they then have the power to preside at the Eucharist, consecrate bread and wine, absolve from sin, and do a few other things. Likewise, no one not ordained by the bishop can do these.

His theory is that there is such a magical priesthood, but that the Holy Spirit picks out people here and there, both men and women, and gives them these powers. This broadens the base of the magical powers considerably.

Many others, including some of our Protestant brothers and apparently numerous Catholics in the early church, simply believed that all Christians share in whatever powers Christ left to his

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STOP NOW

One thing about the Pentagon: it never gives up. Now the Defense Department is urging the Administration to seek Congressional authority to begin construction of an anti-missile defense system around Washington—this in addition to continuing work on four missile shields around Minuteman sites in Montana, North Dakota, Missouri and Wyoming, and at a cost to be added to the more than $1 billion in the current Nixon budget for the Safeguard system. Offhand, it would be hard to imagine a worse time for such an expansion of the United States missile system. At the Helsinki arms limitation talks last fall, the Soviet Union suggested agreement on limiting missile defenses to Moscow and Washington. Coming on top of intelligence reports that the USSR was slowing or stopping construction of its huge SS-9 offensive missiles, this was a promising development. Why jump the gun now? What is the sense of expanding our missile system at a time when such enlargement might prevent the achievement of a very valuable understanding between the two superpowers, perhaps as early as this March, when the next arms control meeting will be held?

The missile system around Washington would be defensive in character, of course, but the construction of such defensive systems has a clear and definite relationship with offensive capabilities. Thus the rationale behind U.S. deployment of MIRV's (multiple independently targeted warheads) is to be able to overwhelm Soviet defenses if these are improved. Soviet reasoning follows the same lines about improvements in our defense system. At stake is each side's ability to deliver a massive response in the event of a surprise attack by the other; any significant improvement by us in our Safeguard defense system would automatically tend to lead the Soviet Union to expand its offensive capability, in order to be able to penetrate our improved defenses and thus not to be helpless in the event of a U.S. attack.

If a recent report in the *New York Times* is accurate, it is for reasons like these that a high-level Administration advisory panel has urged President Nixon to drop United States demands for on-site inspection in an effort to win an agreement with the Soviet Union banning the deployment of multiple warhead missiles. Willingness on the part of the Soviet Union to limit anti-missile defense systems, said the panel, eliminates the need

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for the United States to have multiple entry missiles designed precisely to overwhelm such defenses. How the President will decide this question is anyone's guess; Mr. Nixon has long been on record as favoring on-site inspection. Despite this fact, the advisory panel felt they had to try to persuade him to change his mind, arguing that the U.S. intelligence network which monitors Soviet missiles is perfectly adequate to ensure compliance by the USSR without actual physical inspection. Included on the panel were such well-known foreign-policy conservatives as John J. McCloy, Dean Rusk and General William Norstad. According to the *Times,* their recommendation to the President was unanimous.

Given all this, it is clear that we are rapidly approaching a critical stage in arms limitation negotiations. On the one hand, there is a real hope of introducing some sanity into relations between the Soviet Union and the United States. On the other hand, a false step on either side could trigger the fears of the other great power and set off another and potentially disastrous round in the nuclear arms race. Seen in this context, any decision by the President to accede to the wishes of the Pentagon for an expanded Safeguard program would be tragic.

DOCTORS FOR THE POOR

Debate over the accomplishments or lack of them on the part of the 90th Congress is likely to continue right into the next Presidential election. In the partisan exchanges, strangely enough, one far-reaching new law passed by the 90th has been little noticed—one which could have a pronounced impact on the practice of medicine in the United States. Current estimates are that the nation is short at least 50,000 doctors; in addition, poor distribution of the doctors we do have leaves isolated and impoverished areas with little or no care. Under the terms of the new legislation, which was signed by President Nixon against the advice of some of his advisers, doctors would be paid by the government to practice in ghettos and rural areas. The fees to be charged would be set by the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare. Interestingly enough, no organized opposition to the new law came from the American Medical Association which has in recent years admitted that something was needed to attract doctors out of the affluent suburbs into rural and black areas; however, a high official of the AMA was quoted in the *New York Times* as saying that the law represents "a first step toward nationalizing the whole medical care system." Any proposal that draws a comment like that from an AMA official is, of course, worth serious study, and this one strikes us as very well conceived. We are glad Mr. Nixon signed the measure; it is at least one small step in the vast effort that is needed to reform and rationalize American medicine.

NEXT WEEK

JOSEPH BLENKINSOPP writes in the Religious Book Week issue about the author of *Zorba the Greek* and *The Last Temptation of Christ*:

"Like Joyce and many others before and since, Kazantzakis had bad luck with the particular form of institutional Christianity in which he was raised. He rejected it and it rejected him; the Greek archbishop would not allow his body to lie in church chiefly because of *The Greek Passion* and *The Last Temptation of Christ,* and the last named novel was, for good measure, put on the Roman Catholic index. He had some hard things to say about conventional Christianity. . . . Yet his work, like that of Joyce, is pervaded with Christian symbolism. . . ."

ROME'S NEW APPROACH

One trusts it is coincidence rather than expediency which brings new Vatican norms for examining unorthodox theological opinion into being at a time when upset is reportedly building in Rome over Father Hans Küng's book on infallibility and rumor has Küng being summoned to answer charges arising out of the book. One wants to believe it is coincidence, as the norms, on balance, are meritorious, and it would only defeat them and their purpose if they originated as vehicle to get at a target.

The pastoral intent of the new norms is, in the description of spokesmen, to clarify ideas rather than condemn them. As for the norms themselves, they embody guarantees which progressive theologians, Hans Küng included, have for years been seeking. They provide for more democratic investigative and hearing procedures. The individual whose work is under scrutiny for possible doctrinal error will be informed beforehand what is considered "erroneous" or "dangerous" or "wrong" in his opinions; he will be able to state his own case; he will be represented by someone of his own choosing. If these seem minimal rights by secular standards, they are dramatically innovative in a church which has traditionally protected doctrine by compulsion and condemnation.

It is especially interesting that the new directive from the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith avoids any mention of "heresy" or of "excommunication." In the long view of history this may prove the most important detail to the directive. Certainly it may so prove, if the omissions signal a recognition of the pluralism which is increasingly becoming a part of Catholicism; it may also so prove, if this is further application of the Vatican II principle that in Catholic teaching there is a "hierarchy of truths" which "vary in their relation-

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ship to the foundation of the Christian faith" (*Ecumenism,* 11). If heresy and excommunication are relegated to the past, if it is possible to accommodate unorthodoxies, whole new concepts open up as to who belongs to the church and who is in good standing in the church. The implications here are enormous both in terms of Catholicism itself and Catholicism's contacts with other Christian denominations.

In the meanwhile, there is the tangible fact that the Vatican will be less quick to anathematize and excommunicate, and the further fact that there will be more room for priests and theologians who think "in" though not necessarily "with" the church. At least the latter will henceforth receive hearing before judgment. If this was a long time coming, it is not reason to demean the realization.

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FROM GRAPES TO LETTUCE

SALAD DAYS AT THE PENTAGON

"Ours is a gentle movement. We oppose people but we don't forget they're still our brothers."

It seemed almost ironic to hear Cesar Chavez talk of treating people as brothers at that cold January 15 rally, for moments later he walked into the Federal Court Building to file a suit against the Department of Defense—so often characterized as a huge, impersonal complex—and the commanding general of Fort Hamilton in nearby Brooklyn. That suit was followed by others filed against military installations around the country seeking to enjoin the Pentagon and the various bases from using the extensive buying power of the military to break the lettuce boycott of the UFWOC (United Farm Workers Organizing Committee, AFL-CIO). That power has so far proved to be as untouchable as it is extensive. Countering it may be a crucial test of Cesar's remarkable farm workers union as it struggles to bring economic justice and a better life to farm laborers.

This latest instance of "Pentagon Power" came to light in the first quarter figures of the Defense Department's lettuce purchases, which revealed that the share of the Bud Antle Corporation, chief target of the boycott, had tripled in one year. As recently as December, it looked as though the UFWOC had a chance to bring the growers to the bargaining table after the setbacks of last August and September. (See *Commonweal* 11/6/70.) The union was concentrating on just a couple of growers (Bud Antle averages about 10 percent of the market) and could offer alternatives to concerned consumers. Since September, over 20 percent of the lettuce sold in the U.S. has come in boxes bearing the UFWOC eagle symbol, something that wasn't achieved until the end of the five-year grape campaign. The union made the most of this advantage and the boycott proved extremely successful across the country on the market and chain-store level.

However, no boycott can withstand the kind of outside help Antle is getting. Especially when that "outside help" buys at above the market price and in sufficient quantities to allow Antle to dump its boycotted lettuce elsewhere at lower prices; *and* when the Pentagon further tipped the balance by reducing its purchases from growers who have signed with the UFWOC, including Interharvest, the only lettuce-grower larger than Antle.

Of course, the Pentagon has had its own interpretations of the first quarter report, versions it has not seen fit to express very loudly. A telephone call from the *National Catholic Reporter* to the Pentagon brought this first one to light early this January, asking for an explanation of the charge appearing in a Mankiewicz and Braden syndicated column that Antle sold more lettuce to the government in the first quarter of fiscal '71 than in the entire fiscal year of 1970.

Navy Lt. Frederick Gorell responded that although the figures given were accurate it is unfair to compare a first quarter figure to another entire year's total since the government generally makes its major lettuce purchase from Antle in the first quarter of each year. Secondly, the Pentagon spokesman claimed that last year's purchase from Antle went down considerably because of labor problems that would have prevented contract fulfillment.

Going back two years doesn't make the government look any better, however, when viewed in terms of Antle's share of Defense Department purchases, which would reveal any evidence of favoritism better than simple cost figures. Thus during fiscal '69, Department of Defense lettuce purchases from Bud Antle Corporation amounted to 9.1 percent of its total. For fiscal '70, it was 8.3 percent. During the first quarter of fiscal '71, the percent was 29.1. It would be interesting to hear what terms the Pentagon would use to describe the rise from 8.3 to 29.1 percent if the '69-to-'70 drop is called a "considerable" one. The government doesn't come out much better in a comparison of first quarter figures: 16 percent in 1970 compared to the 29 percent in '71.

The clincher came a few weeks ago when second-quarter figures became available. Antle's second quarter share of the governments purchases was 14 percent in 1971, an increase of almost 500 percent over 1970's

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second-quarter 2.9 percent. Nor do these figures tell the whole story. Perhaps half of the lettuce Antle sells to the Defense Department is sold locally so that, while Antle's share of the overall market in the second quarter is about 7 percent, Antle claims 14 percent of the Pentagon's purchases and possibly another 14 percent from local military purchases. As Cesar put it a few weeks ago, "Only half of the cat is out of the bag."

A more recent Pentagon interpretaton, this one cited in *Newsweek*, holds that "the increase was caused by union jurisdictional disputes and the shortages resulting from UFWOC picket lines that closed down other growers." The latter reason is suspect when one considers that the second quarter showed an even greater increase over fiscal '70 than the first quarter one did. And the UFWOC had switched from a strike to a boycott two weeks before the second quarter even began. One further wonders why the Pentagon couldn't have bought from the growers who had signed with the Farm Workers and certainly weren't being picketed by them.

The credibility of the "jurisdictional dispute" story is similarly weak. It is important enough, though, to merit a close examination since it has been the chief means by which Antle and the other growers have excused their refusal to bargain with the UFWOC.

For months, Antle and an association of about 60 Salinas growers have hid behind the whirlwind contracts they signed with the Teamsters Union within days after the iceberg lettuce campaign was announced. Those contracts are the basis of the growers' claim that the dispute is not between them and the UFWOC over the latter's right to organize lettuce workers, but between the Farmworkers and the Teamsters over which union has "jurisdiction" over lettuce workers.

The UFWOC, on the other hand, asserts that the lettuce workers aren't legitimately represented by the Teamsters since no elections were held. When attempts to get the growers to relinquish the contracts proved unsuccessful, fully 80 percent of the workers "voted with their feet" by going on strike, clearly rejecting the Teamsters Union as their representative and the contracts it signed without their consent.

Secondly, since 1967 when they gave up their "sweetheart contract" signed with the Perelli-Minetti Wineries, the Teamsters have had a jurisdictional *agreement* with the UFWOC, an agreement that was reinforced by a coexistence pact made between the two unions early in August of 1970 and broken by the Teamsters a few days later.

Furthermore, the Teamsters have long since stopped honoring their end of the lettuce contracts. As a *New York Times* editorial stated early in December: "The leaders of the truck union, both nationally and on the West Coast, have acknowledged that their union has no business in this field. But most of the Salinas growers refuse to relinquish their pacts with the Teamsters, even though that union has instructed its locals not to collect any dues or provide any service under the rush contracts."

Fourthly, Bud Antle himself has had to tell under oath the whole truth regarding an argument he has frequently used to bolster the "jurisdictional dispute" story: that he has had contracts with the Teamsters since 1961. In his testimony before the California State Supreme Court he admitted that in that 1961 election, 45 out of 50 of his workers voted to ratify a Teamster agreement. At the time, Antle had 1500 workers, 45 of whom scarcely constitute a majority.

Furthermore, the contracts specifically excluded braceros, Mexican nationals who in 1961 comprised three-fourths of all lettuce workers in California, and hourly workers, who account for almost all the rest. In other words, 3 percent of the work force ratified a union that covered about as many of the workers while effectively preventing the rest from organizing their own union. The 1961 contracts don't even stand up on their own, much less lend any legitimacy to the Teamster-grower contracts of last August.

The "jurisdictional dispute" story is a handy device to distract our critical attention from the real problems, the working conditions and life situation of farm workers and the continuing suppression of their right to organize.

Although the UFWOC sees real hope in the California State Supreme Court hearings on the jurisdictional dispute issue, the second-quarter Defense Department figures have produced largely negative reactions among the Farm Workers. A sharp drop in second-quarter purchases of scab lettuce would have indicated that the Farm Workers were at least getting through to the Pentagon. Instead, Antle lettuce has been found on every base checked by the UFWOC.

What has the reaction been among the Farm Workers? Just a few days ago, Cesar said on the phone, "At first it looked like an impossible task to keep up consumer organizing plus taking on the job of trying to organize within the military. The response has already been greater than we had hoped for. Here's another case where what looked like an obstacle may turn into an opportunity."

What are some of those responses? A lieutenant in charge of supplies for a ship in Baltimore refused to allow Antle lettuce on the ship. An Air Force captain from Sawyer Air Force Base sent a letter and a check requesting that we send him leaflets. All over the Presidio in San Francisco, bumper stickers have appeared, "Lifers eat lettuce." It's happening just like everything else that has happened in the union—plenty of patience, plenty of hard work, plenty of caring, and then things begin to change. JIM DRAKE and GLEN GERSMEHL

(Jim Drake has worked with Cesar Chavez since 1962 and been his executive assistant since 1965; Glen Gersmehl is on the staff of Christianity and Crisis.*)*

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WHAT MOONWALK? WHAT MOON?

PETER STEINFELS

A month ago I noted a letter from educator John Holt in *Change* mazazine, and something Holt mentioned has been nagging me ever since. He had read a news report of a poll which questioned a sample of several thousands on our space flights. Over half of the blacks and over a third of the whites said they did not believe that the moon flights and moon landing had ever taken place.

I have not been able to verify this report, and the astounding percentages of "non-believers" leaves me, in turn, shaking my head in disbelief. Yet without supplying me with the exact details, several friends assured me that they too read of some such poll and that the percentages were indeed staggering.

The latest moonshot brought Holt's letter to mind again, but so did the remark a friend made when she noticed the first banner headline about the coming space extravaganza. "Well," she said, "I guess we'd better start watching out for what they'll try to pull off in foreign policy." She was right, of course, although this time the nation's "watching" was considerably obscured by an embargo on news about the latest developments in Southeast Asia (and another embargo on news about the first embargo). The purpose of this sorry masquerade was not to protect Allied troops from the enemy, who knew very well what was happening, but to protect American politicians from the citizenry.

The invasion of Laos followed upon that little matter of semantics in Cambodia. Simply a glance through a week's news helps you understand why some people might not believe men have ever walked on the moon.

Small item: Senator Clifford P. Case revealed that Radio Free Europe is subsidized by the Central Intelligence Agency. Not so surprising, or shocking, really. No one had ever mistaken Radio Free Europe for a stronghold of political debate. But then there is the little matter of the government's public agreement to a recommendation by the Katzenbach Committee, which surveyed previous CIA capers in 1967. "No federal agency shall provide covert financial assistance or support direct or indirect, to any of the nation's educational or voluntary organizations." No exceptions allowed, it was agreed.

Larger item: In the last six years nearly $700 million of Food for Peace funds have gone to buy armaments for foreign regimes. Spending Food for Peace money this way seems a bit grisly even for a bureaucracy well trained in doublespeak. Previously we thought one had to choose between guns and butter; but guns and butter, it turns out, are the same thing.

A variation on this theme is found in the revelations made by Senator Edward Kennedy's Senate Subcommittee on Refugees. Kennedy released two censored reports of the General Accounting Office showing that money allocated for aiding refugees in Laos has been employed instead to support the CIA's Laotian guerrilla army. Half the funds for an AID village health program in fact were spent on military operations. Incidentally, the same reports concluded that the refugee programs were poorly managed; villages were congested and without proper water and medical supplies; the refugee mortality rate was soaring.

Still larger item: President Nixon publicly announced a "new American revolution," beginning with the next budget's allocations for revenue-sharing. Setting aside the rhetoric of revolution—when pantyhose advertisements quote Karl Marx, why should President Nixon deprive himself on that score?—detailed analysis of the budget, such as cannot be done in this space, shows that the supposed new priorities and reallocation of funds amount to a good deal less than the President suggested. Instead of changing priorities, we merely change names; and one wonders why we don't solve the unemployment problem by changing the definition of "full employment" from its current level of 4.5 percent unemployed to 6 or 7 percent unemployed.

Mr. Moynihan, some while back, wondered why the rumor that President Nixon was considering cancelling the 1972 elections had spread so widely and so swiftly. The point was not that anyone necessarily believed the rumor; they just didn't—what was shocking to Mr. Moynihan—disbelieve it either. As John Holt wrote, after offering the illustration of the poll on moon landings: "Our public men have destroyed public speech, and thus any sense of a public existence. We are locked in our private experience. People feel that if you don't see it happen with your own eyes, you can't be sure it happened." Holt's sentences go far to explain the attitude of many young people, and by no means only those identified with dissent or radical politics, who are profoundly sceptical at all efforts to intellectualize, to generalize, to discuss rationally. Only their feelings (they hope) will not betray them.

But this malaise is not limited to the young. It affects all of us. It affects those Americans who cheer Agnew and direct their disbelief about public events at the media as well as those who direct it at the government. Unfortunately, there is no way to work the price of deception into government cost accounting. We are running a bankrupting deficit.

Note: after writing the above, I heard on the radio that a network poll showed that 46 percent of its sample believed U.S. troops had accompanied the Vietnamese into Laos. In short, they tended to believe *Izvestia* rather than Sec. Laird.

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IS POVERTY ILLEGAL?

An opportunity for a quiet revolution

ISIDORE SILVER

The title is, of course, ambiguous; the ambiguity is, of course, calculated. It could refer to the fact that many Americans believe that poverty is a form of moral shortcoming akin to that which induces an individual to commit crime. In this view society is the victim of the "crime" and welfare "handouts" are tribute paid to the moral thief. On the other hand, it could mean that the condition of poverty, if tolerated by society, is a social crime for which victims—the poor—should have legal redress.

The ambiguity is not confined to the social perceptions —or anxieties—of American people alone, but is reflected in our contemporary legal philosophy. On January 12th the Supreme Court held, in *Wyman v James*, by a six to three vote, that the Constitution does not bar "home visits" by welfare caseworkers. Justice Blackmun's majority opinion is replete with anxiety about the rights of society:

> One who dispenses purely private charity naturally has an interest in and expects to know how his charitable funds are utilized and put to work. The public, when it is the provider, expects the same.

He then acknowledges both the degree of dependence upon social largesse by the poor and the rightness of that dependence: "What Mrs. James appears to want from the agency which provides her and her infant son with the necessities for life is the right to receive those necessities upon her informational terms . . . ." Justice Douglas, in dissent, noted that "welfare in aid of dependent children . . . has an aura of suspicion" and Justices Marshall and Brennan caustically observed that "For protecting the privacy of her home, Mrs. James lost the sole means of support for herself and her infant son. For protecting the privacy of his commercial warehouse [and obtaining a 1967 Supreme Court ruling that a warrant to enter was needed by a fire inspector] Mr. See received a $100 suspended fine."

Undoubtedly, the dissenting opinions in the *James* case accurately reflect the belief of many "poverty lawyers" about the "system"; it is quite clear then just why their activities on behalf of their clientele have engendered so much political controversy. Ronald Reagan, the arch enemy of the poverty advocates, on the other hand has resolved the ambiguity for himself—and, in so doing, has posed the fundamental issue of whether the "Welfare State" is that in name only or whether it, by definition, is actively required to foster the social good. By vetoing the $1.8 million federal appropriation to California Rural Legal Assistance, Reagan has drawn the battle lines for perhaps the most significant domestic debate of the '70s, the role of the legal system in the quest to "abolish" poverty in America. To properly describe the nature of the true political controversy at the heart of all the recent fractious headlines, and to comprehend the dim outlines of that debate, we must first turn (perhaps improbably) to that intrepid troubadour of the wisdom of contemporary youth, Charles A. Reich.

Before he undertook the ambitious task of greening America, Professor Reich (the First Reich?) wrote two articles in the *Yale Law Journal* arguing that welfare in the Welfare State was more than merely a dubious largesse conferred—or withheld—by a capricious government; rather it was something akin to a "right,"

ISIDORE SILVER *is Chairman of the Department of Government and Economics at John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York.*

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which could not be arbitrarily denied. He observed that:

> society today is built around entitlement. The automobile dealer has his franchise, the doctor and lawyer their professional licenses, the worker his union membership, contract and pension rights, the executive his contract and stock options; all are devices to aid security and independence. Many of these entitlements now flow from government. . . . It is only the poor whose entitlements, although recognized by public policy, have not been effectively enforced.

This of course contradicts the notion, expressed in a 1941 New York case upholding the denial of welfare to a man who lived in unsanitary conditions, that "he has no right to defy the standards and conventions of civilized society while being supported at public expense."

Of course, Professor Reich was thinking of the problem in terms of the "rights" of those on public assistance to be free of arbitrary denials or cut-offs of such benefits or to be subject to onerous restrictions such as loyalty oaths and requirements of reimbursement of welfare payments by relatives, and to be free of harassments in the forms of "midnight" welfare raids. To a large extent these procedural and substantive rights of the poor have been vindicated in the courts since 1965. But underlying Reich's approach is his general statement—and its then unseen implications that

> In a society where a significant portion of the population is dependent on social welfare, decisions (concerning welfare) are among the most important that a government can make.

Whatever the present legal merits and implications of Professor Reich's position, clearly, the theory has little political appeal—at least to Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan. Indeed, recent political reprisals against the Neighborhood Legal Services Program—the government's "chosen instrument" to bring the poor into the social mainstream—by both politicians indicate that the theory —and the careers of the vigorous lawyers espousing it, often indirectly—are both in dire jeopardy.

The Nixon Family Assistance Plan—opposed even in its modest form by conservatives—is no exception. It is perceived by its sponsor as a charitable largesse, and not a legal obligation. The Nixon view that the "work feature" of the proposal lies at its heart runs counter to Reich's observation that

> The [welfare] issues are sharpest when a proposed retraining program involves work that is foreign to a man's prior skills, requires a acceptance of a lower status, demands transfer to a new location, or presents the risk that no jobs will be available even after retraining.

A public accustomed to hearing of the virtually daily battles faced by both Legal Services and Family Assistance should not be misled about the true nature of the conflict—the determination, once and for all, whether poverty has social roots and whether society as a whole has the duty to either eliminate it or to compensate for its existence.

A cursory review of the current travails of the Legal Services Program will put the matter into some perspective. The Office of Legal Services, an agency of the Office of Economic Opportunity, was founded in the balmy days of Lyndon Johnson's "war against poverty" to insure decent legal representation for those three million Americans who live below the (inadequately defined) poverty line. The office supervises the expenditure of approximately $50 million per year to some 265 local non-profit corporations which employ full-time salaried lawyers. Most of the programs are relatively uncontroversial and involve "traditional" litigation—suits against landlords, merchants and errant spouses. Others, distinctly in disfavor, are aimed at government itself.

In California, to cite a prominent example, Governor Reagan was prevented from instituting a $200 million cut in Medicaid services by California Rural Legal Assistance; in retaliation, the former screen star vetoed that $1.8 million grant, and there are signs that the veto will be sustained by OEO. Other sore spots have arisen in the South, where one legal services agency (Mississippi) sued to advance desegregation, another (New Mexico) attacked a denial of water rights to Navajo Indians, and a third (Florida) tried to protect Caribbean farm workers. The recent dismissal of Legal Services' national director Terry Lenzer by the Administration also indicated the degree of dissatisfaction with the activism of some of the "new breed" of poverty lawyers. Nixon's decision to fund CRLA only until July 31, 1971 (interpreted by Reagan, at least, as a phasing out) is probably designed to either (a) adumbrate activism or (b) permit the financial axe to fall in mid-summer, at a politically propitious moment. All of these are, of course, straws in the wind; the question as we have seen, is what straws, what wind? Is it the mild gale of reform or the tornado of revolution (albeit peaceful legal revolution)? The answer is that it is both.

The first modest premise of activist protection of the rights of the poor lies in the sacred American belief that government cannot violate its own regulations. Almost all of the specific situations described above were reactions to failures of state governmental agencies to abide by either their own rules or the standards set by supervisory federal agencies; occasionally, Constitutional attacks upon arbitrary federal rules have been successfully mounted. Thus, in a sense, the poverty lawyers have acted as Ombudsmen for the poor and this activity is socially approved, even by conservative bar associations. Blatant political efforts to eliminate this function—in the form of proposals to prevent suits against governmental agencies—have been defeated in Congress, largely be-

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cause of the intervention of the American Bar Association. Clearly, Ronald Reagan is on shaky ground when he protests these quite reasonable activities; if his veto is to be eventually overridden it will be because of Nixon's recognition that public opinion supports the poverty lawyers' condemnation of bureaucratic arbitrariness.

Although the chances for survival of an activist legal service program, in its present form, are good, the very existence of an anti-establishment establishment, of necessity, poses insuperable dilemmas for our cautious politicians. At the moment, the problems are only dimly perceived by all concerned. As their outlines become clearer a greater and more widespread disenchantment must, and will, occur. That will happen when our "affluent" society—through its courts initially—will be faced with the aforementioned—and immodest—questions about the nature of our commitment to a full and decent life for all our citizens.

Continuing Tradition

As the poverty lawyers go beyond the role of protective, to that of innovative "Ombudsman"—as I would argue they must—they will find much support in our "traditional" legal institutions and practice. American legal history has been studded with startling innovations within a traditional "common law" framework. The revolutionary decisions of the United States Supreme Court during John Marshall's reign and through the first thirty years of the twentieth century (including the startling holding that corporations were "persons" under the 14th Amendment) demonstrate the aid of nascent capitalism was an avowed juridical enterprise. Our Judges, as well as our capitalists, were distinctly "Consciousness one," to use the language of the Second Reich.

These famous Supreme Court decisions, unfortunately, serve to obscure the fact that non-constitutional, "private" law was developing in similar directions during the booming 19th and 20th centuries. The ability of the American legal systems to adapt to the demands of a rapidly industrializing society and yet to retain the basic configuration of early English law must stand as a monument to the skill and inventiveness of the legal profession. Thus, the poverty warriors, when they bring "class actions" against errant merchants, are continuing —not instituting—a tradition of determined, militant use of the extant procedures of an ongoing flexible system.

Of course, the objection to this "revolution" is that, unlike its predecessor, it is directed against so-called private enterprise. In a sense, it is an attempt to use the legal system to redistribute wealth—an object for which many groups have struggled unsuccessfully in the political arena. Where redistribution of wealth is not directly involved, the objective—equally objectionable—has been the redistribution of governmental services, a form of considerable wealth in the Welfare State. As Reich once said, "But today more and more of our wealth takes the form of rights on status rather than tangible goods." Obviously, restoration by California of $200 million to Medicaid required either (a) increased taxation of, or (b) cutting of other governmental services. In either event, fundamental economic and social relationships are altered.

Despite certain well-developed precedents, the current attack on the "system" contains some—again objectionable—novelties. Thus a legal services program is a startling departure from the American tradition of individualization of justice. The "common law" system has traditionally stressed the equality of access to courts (the direct corollary of the presumed equality of bargaining power of the adversaries) and the neutrality of the rules by which judicial conflict is governed. An addition to numerous procedural rules discouraging group actions, a web of ethical norms often prevents attorneys from soliciting group activity or from representing individuals through organizations which pay fees or salaries.

Of course, again, often social developments have conspired to break down these traditional restraints. In the late fifties, the Supreme Court did sanction certain forms of group legal activity—in areas involving civil rights suits brought by, or on behalf of, the NAACP in the South. Several landmark decisions recognized that the lawsuit was a *political* weapon and that freedom of political association superseded traditional canons of ethics relating to lawyers' permissible activities. Five years ago, the Supreme Court recognized that fraternal organizations such as labor unions could "hire" lawyers to represent their membership in certain matters. Thus, there are some recent precedents for both the structure of legal services for the poor (salaried employee-lawyers) and the aggressiveness of the poverty lawyers in bringing massive suits by groups against both government and private entrepreneurs.

The poverty lawyers are only beginning to mine the depths of the doctrine that group interests, rather than only individual ones, are properly the subject of legal attention and that the traditional form of the lawsuit may be used to advance political positions. Ironically, the term "class suit," with its Marxist connotations, originated in the ability of a shareholder of a corporation to sue to demand dividends on behalf of all owners. The doctrine has only been hesitantly extended by the courts and its implications are well understood by politicians—or else why would the Administration oppose such suits by consumers purchasing defective products?

If one consumer can sue to demand damages on behalf of all those who purchased—and were presumably damaged by—a defective item, the economic threat to the manufacturer is clearly devastating. After all, the great economic scandal of the fifties—the anti-trust con-

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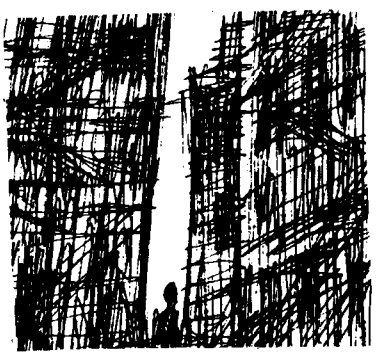
spiracy among power-equipment suppliers, including General Electric, to set prices—engendered the payment of hundreds of millions of dollars to states and municipalities (the "class" which overpaid). If middle-class consumers banding together in group action are perceived as threats, what can the Administration think of the poor, militant and united, represented by aggressive advocates—paid by government, yet!—to extract justice from government? The prospect can only cause a collective national shudder from the governor's mansion in Sacramento to the dingiest furniture merchants in Harlem.



Apart from the adaptation of traditional and developing practices to the needs of the poor, other kinds of ongoing legal activity promise to wreak profound changes in the society. For instance, when Reich and other law-review writers talk about vesting of rights to a share of wealth in traditional "property" terms, they are essentially contending that the Welfare Society must exist in law as well as in presumed fact. The implications are revolutionary; if every man has a basic, recognized freedom from want, then is it not a concomitant responsibility of government to insure that freedom? What follows is my own analysis of the revolutionary tornado of which I have spoken. I believe that the inevitable direction of poverty law will take this tack and that all involved, at least subliminally, recognize that such will occur, and that this recognition lies at the base of the developing conflict and will shape that conflict.

Should the "right" to Welfare exist, there may be a Constitutional right to require Congress and state legislatures to maintain a certain—and increasing—level of funding for public assistance programs. If the relatively benign decisions of the Warren Court involving only attacks upon police and other administrative agency practices were extended by venturesome federal judges to the legislative branch itself, to force appropriations, a titanic battle would doubtlessly result. *That* would be creating precedent with a vengeance, especially in light of a 1960 Supreme Court decision holding that even social security benefits, to which working employees contribute, were not accrued and vested, so that rational denial was legally permissible. The case, *Flemming v. Nestor,* was a "Warren Court" decision and will doubtlessly color the thinking of the Burger Court on similar matters. Of course, in an era of conservative drift at the top, often venturesome lower federal judges will strike out with some legal boldness, so all is not necessarily hopeless. A vital prerequisite, however, is the existence of a sustained attack on the courts until one or more judges "break" with precedent—and, obviously the ideal agency for such attack is legal services.

The doctrine that government, once having committed itself to legal recognition of some basic human need, cannot arbitrarily disassociate itself from continuing to maintain such recognition, is not entirely novel. For instance, in 1967, the Supreme Court in deciding the case of *Mulkey v. Reitman,* overthrew a California referendum mandating that freedom of choice in the sale of homes was an inviolate principle; the proposition had had the effect of nullifying several state and local laws specifically forbidding racial discrimination in housing, and this feature was crucial to the Supreme Court's decision.

Although *Reitman* is not necessarily precedent for the general proposition that the state has a continuing duty to recognize and to fund (much less to continuously recognize and to adequately fund) a certain ongoing activity, there is enough flexibility of language in that opinion to allow for expansion in that direction. If precedent be needed—and judges like to insulate themselves from criticism by finding it (or often, creating it)—then we have certain scattered decisions throughout our history that have held that local government had the "absolute" duty to provide relief to paupers. If the qualifications to that general statement be overlooked—e.g., the definition of "pauper," and the fact that a relief recipient could not sue to enforce the "absolute" duty—then we can say, along with an N.Y.U. law professor, that:

> The Supreme Court or Congress may one day compel the states to pay public assistance benefits which are sufficient to maintain . . . a reasonable subsistence compatible with decency and health.

As Reich put it, "the concept of right is most urgently needed in respect to benefits like unemployment compensation, public assistance and old age insurance." As I have indicated, judicial recognition of such a "right" would not be a startling departure from either our traditions or recent legal developments.

Ironically, should poverty lawyers or their intellectual mentors, the law professors, successfully make the point that general public policy is enforceable legally by individuals, so that grandiose social pronouncements found in preambles to laws are not nullified by spartan enabling and appropriation clauses, we will have come full circle. Judge Learned Hand once argued that the Bill of Rights was merely a series of moral admonitions not enforceable (or at least not fully enforceable) in the courts, and that important "business" of government

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should not be stymied by endless attacks on behalf of allegedly aggrieved individuals. Of course, the history of Bill of Rights litigation effectively refutes the Hand theory. The intriguing question is whether recognition that loquacious social pronouncements, in law and other public policy manifestoes, (such as the "four freedoms" of Franklin Delano Roosevelt) become, *ipso facto,* legal and not merely social commitments.

The fear that a commitment to forcing government to follow its own rules, where the poor are concerned, may well mature into the concept that government should be forced to follow and to implement its policies must surely lie at the heart of Governor Ronald Reagan's nightmares, if not his diurnal political philosophy. As the debate about legal services continues, more Americans will realize the true nature of the combat. It is a pity that the battles of the '70s will be fought indirectly—and through those fragile and vulnerable agencies, the courts—and that the issues will be muddled and complex. It is an even greater pity that the right to dignity which is at the heart of both the present conflict and the one we dimly perceive has been recognized in most Western nations for almost a century while the "Greening of America" has yet to occur.

REBIRTH OF JEWISH MYSTICISM

Beyond the Enlightenment

DAVID SINGER

A specter is haunting American Jewish life today, the specter of Jewish mysticism reborn. Though still a distinctly minor phenomenon, evidence is available of an emerging current of Jewish mysticism in the midst of the paradigmatically "modern" American Jewish community. Most American Jews probably first became aware of such a development when, in a recent issue of *Life,* they saw pictures of Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach, garbed in yarmulke, beard, earlocks and lovebeads, presiding at the wedding in San Francisco's Candlestick Park of two members of his "hippie" congregation, the House of Love and Prayer.

To readers of *Jewish Spectator,* however, the picture story in *Life* probably came as no great surprise, since they had already been informed in Trvde Weiss-Rosmarin's venom-drenched editorial columns about two other Jewish figures involved with Jewish mysticism, namely Rabbis Richard Rubenstein and Zalman Schachter. Rubenstein, who has achieved a considerable reputation as a Jewish exponent of "radical theology," has, in addition to flirting with paganism, turned to Jewish mysticism in quest of a god who is Holy Nothingness. Schachter, a self-styled Lubavitcher Hasid, has been dubbed the "LSD Rabbi" because of his advocacy of the religious use of psychedelic drugs.

The latest, and probably most important, indication of a burgeoning Jewish mysticism, however, is the appearance of Rabbi Herbert Weiner's *9½ Mystics: The Kabbala Today* (Holt, Rinehart, $6.95; Collier Books, paper, $1.95). Weiner's interest in Jewish mystical thought is particularly significant because he is a product of Reform Judaism, the very incarnation of enlightened, rational, liberal religion. By examining *9½ Mystics* in the context of contemporary cultural trends, therefore, it may be possible to gain a better understanding of the dynamic behind the current flowering of Jewish mysticism in America.

If the Jewish mystical revival is to be seen in a proper perspective, it is important to distinguish it from the more general blossoming of Jewish theology in America of the last few years, though the two movements do overlap in origin and direction. In recent years a group of sophisticated and articulate young theologians have been reexamining, particularly in the pages of *Judaism,* such issues as election, revelation and *halacha.* These issues, however, are clearly within the classical mainstream of Jewish thought, whereas the concerns of the new Jewish mystics are much more esoteric. Equally important is the fact that the theological renewal has, to a significant degree, been inspired by a specific event, namely the Holocaust, whereas the mystical quest has, in every case but Rubenstein's, been prompted by the general drift of contemporary culture.

Viewed in a broad cultural perspective the Jewish mystical revival is to be seen as a variant of the post-modern counter culture that is emerging in the United States. To be post-modern is to go beyond the Enlightenment world view with its emphasis on objective consciousness and reason, and this is precisely what the new Jewish mystics are advocating. In doing so, they are adding their voices to those of such contemporary gurus as Allen Ginsberg, Norman Brown, Alan Watts, Paul Goodman and Timothy Leary, all of whom glory in

DAVID SINGER *is an assistant professor of history at Chicago State College.*

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subjective, affective, emotional, mystic, and ecstatic modes of being. For the latter individuals, the Enlightenment *weltanschauung* has exhausted itself as a viable source of existence, and they are thus searching for a new transforming vision of reality. Taken together their views constitute a cultural alternative to modernity. For their part, the contemporary Jewish mystics are seeking such an alternative within the Jewish tradition.

As the current revival of various manifestations of the occult makes clear, interest in a post-modern counter culture is not confined to a handful of intellectuals. It is hardly a positive omen for the future of the Enlightenment world view when, in the middle of the twentieth century, many people find nothing quite as relevant as astrology, Oriental religions, para-psychology, demonology and even witchcraft. This is particularly true when the most serious and devoted students of these esoteric matters are found on the campuses of the leading American universities. To most people, college youth conjures up the image of socially involved activists. Among a small but growing segment of avant-garde college students, however, the goal of social transformation is being supplanted by that of personal salvation. Veterans of various New Left movements, these post-modern young people, with the aid of psychedelic drugs and the occult, are turning inward in quest of individual meaning. One such group of students at M.I.T. is described by Milton Himmelfarb in *Commentary* as follows:

> . . . as the weeks moved on . . . the students' true interests surfaced . . . Beginning with Asian philosophy, it moved on to meditation, then yoga, then Zen, then Tibet, then successively to the *Bardo Thodol*, tantra, the Kundalini, the chakras, the *I Ching*, karate and aikedo, the yang-yin macrobiotic (brown rice) diet, Gurdjieff, Maher Baba, astrology, astral bodies, auras, UFO's, Tarot cards, parapsychology, witchcraft and magic. And, underlying everything, of course, the psychedelic drugs.
>
> And they weren't plebeians. Intellectually they were aristocrats with the highest average math scores in the land, Ivy League verbal scores, and two-to-three years saturation in M.I.T. science.

At a time when, as Milton Himmelfarb has stated, opium (in the broad sense) is the religion of the avant-garde rather than religion the opiate of the masses, it is hardly surprising that an American Reform rabbi is willing to suspend his disbelief and immerse himself in Jewish mysticism. If nothing is too "way out" for people at M.I.T., why should it be any different for a graduate of H.U.C.?

It is almost impossible for those who are firmly committed to modernity to comprehend, let alone to empathize with, promptings toward a post-modern world view. This is quite apparent from the critical response to Rabbi Weiner's *9½ Mystics*. Being good children of the Enlightenment, most reviewers have been unable to grasp Weiner's true purpose in writing about, as the subtitle of his book indicates, the Kabbala today. Thus, writing in *Commentary*, David Daiches, the literary critic, treats *9½ Mystics* as a pleasant journalistic diversion. Much more uncomprehending is Rabbi Lewis Newman's reaction to the book. A Reform rabbi himself, he simply cannot fathom why a rabbi representing the "rationalistic, scientifically motivated interpretations of Judaism" would waste his time writing about "personalities and movements highly esoteric and non-intellectual in character." Only those who have a "strong pro-Kabbalistic inclination," he informs us, will value *9½ Mystics*. As for those Jews who wish to be enlightened about Judaism's "ethical and homoletical message," (shades of the Age of Reason!) they will have to look elsewhere for guidance. To cap his comedy of mis-understanding, Newman fails to identify correctly the half-mystic referred to in the title of the book as being Weiner himself. Given his intellectual premises, however, Newman's failure of imagination is hardly surprising.

In the introduction and epilogue to *9½ Mystics*, and in a brief article, "Jewish Mysticism for Us," in *Dimensions*, Weiner has made clear the distinctly post-modern nature of his mystical quest. Drawing an explicit parallel between the contemporary fascination with Eastern religions, psychedelic drugs and the occult, and his own interest in Kabbala, he explains how, as one of the "children from the Chambers of Yearning," he was attracted to Judaism's "Hidden Wisdom." Finding that the "nourishment of his specific soul-root" required a spiritual fare "more substantial than what is offered by life surfaces"—"secrets having to do with the subterranean urges and needs of the life and death impulses, with the conflicts between spirit and flesh, between our demonic and angelic selves"—Weiner spiced up his basic religious diet, the "meat" of the law, with heavy doses of the "salt" of Jewish mysticism. In our "very hungry" generation others were seeking spiritual sustenance from "strange foods . . . and chemicals." As for himself, however, Weiner had tapped Judaism's "own sources of supply, including those subtle flavors found in the hidden 'orchard'."

In *9½ Mystics*, Weiner describes the fruit that he found in Judaism's *pardes*. Equally important, however, he retraces the steps by which he entered the hidden orchard. This is absolutely essential, since, on their own, most moderns would find it impossible to break through the "seventy seals of language, superstitions and plain foolishness" that ensconce Jewish mysticism's insights. Employing the same methodology that he used successfully in his earlier book *The Wild Goats of Ein Gedi*, Weiner, therefore, takes the reader by the hand and introduces him to those teachers who made available to him the "secrets" of Judaism's "inner chambers."

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Thus, *9½ Mystics* contains numerous fascinating vignettes describing Weiner's encounters with, among others, Abraham Chen, S. Z. Setzer, Zvi Yehudah Kook, Gershom Sholem and Adin Steinsaltz. Often, these men are as remarkable and "way out" as the ideas they teach. S. Z. Setzer, the "mystic on East Broadway," employed Kabbalistic doctrines as an aid in picking winning horses at the racetrack. Gershom Sholem, the contemporary "accountant" of Kabbala, on the other hand, has attemped to make an objective science out of something as subjective as mysticism. Despite their individual differences, however, Weiner's teachers share a passionate love and profound knowledge of Jewish mysticism, and brought him in touch with some of its deepest mysteries.

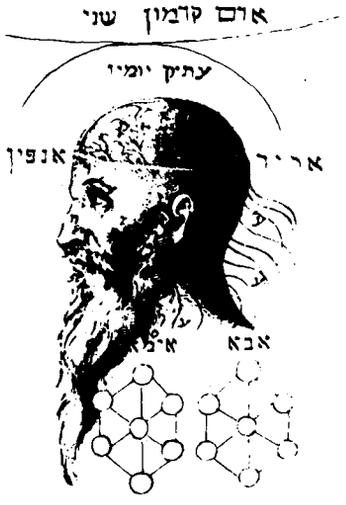
Having entered Judaism's mystical orchard and returned, what kind of spiritual delicacies did Weiner bring back? Many readers of *9½ Mystics* will no doubt be sorely disappointed, but Weiner makes no claim to have discovered instant ecstasy or the keys to salvation. It is a measure of his seriousness and intellectual honesty that he confesses to have come up with "only some hypotheses and more questions." Though he has tasted the fruit of the *pardes*, Weiner is, at the present time, only a half-mystic, drawn toward a post-modern stance, yet unable to break decisively with modernity. *9½ Mystics* is thus an interim report on a mystical quest that is far from being completed. Yet Weiner has already sampled enough of the hidden orchard's spiritual fare to know that it can greatly help to fortify contemporary Judaism. What then are the mystical ingredients that he wishes to see added to the Jewish religious diet?

What Weiner finds most attractive in Jewish mysticism is its fundamental assumption that the external world is simply a thickened extension of a more important inner reality, and that this inner reality is the source of ultimate truth, insight and experience. Such a belief, Weiner argues, is absolutely indispensable if one is to make any sense of life:

> Plainly, as far as we can see with our eyes or feel with our hands, there is no supersubstance . . . which can survive the universal cataract of death. If there is something left when all else is gone, then it is something other than the surface which disappears before our eyes. As to the Affirmations made by classical religious texts . . . if they are not lies, [they] must have a deeper meaning; God's will must be something other than what can be plainly observed. As to those wellsprings of joy that are able to remain unaffected by outer catastrophe, they must be located in a layer of existence so deep as to be hidden . . .

To many, no doubt, it will appear that the Kabbalists are simply indulging in a game, in a form of play, when they populate the inner realm with ten *sefirot*, four worlds, etc., and when they employ various rituals and acts of contemplation to bring about proper "couplings" and the flow of *shefa*, life-sustaining grace. Following Huizinga's classic analysis in *Home Ludens* of the "play" element in culture, however, Weiner is quick to retort that it is precisely in "play" that man reveals himself at his most creative. Far from being a childish diversion, "play," in rising above the level of the serious, can lead to an encounter with the beautiful and the sacred. If, therefore, "the Kabbala is a game . . . it is one that is played for high stakes; nothing less is involved than the sustenance of God's creation."

The belief in an inner reality underlying the external world is hardly unique to Jewish mysticism. What is unique, however, Weiner maintains, is Jewish mysticism's insistence that any effort to link up with the inner realm must involve the whole person. In the Kabbala "there is no ascent of the soul which does not involve the body—



all the body, with its sweat and semen and smell, swelling with life juices or putrefying with death." For Weiner this is no mere hypothesis. In experimenting with various Jewish mystical rituals and exercises, he repeatedly found that the "most delicate spiritual phenomena [could] appear when life [was] confronted in all its bodily aspects, but evaporate[d] with the attempt to rise above them." If contemporary Judaism all too often lacks vitality, Weiner argues, it is due to the fact that it is almost exclusively an affair of the mind:

> Delicate and exquisitely spiritual fruits have drawn their strength from roots that were deeply immersed in the dark regions of unconscious bodily drives . . . [There is a] connection between the sewer and the spirit. The problem is to turn the descent into the ascent.
>
> But this is a secret whose conscious revelation seems to have been reserved only for the few . . . Surely it is a secret that is closed to the odorless, bodiless, sanitized religious expressions of our day.

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Rather than being a source of mere edification and enlightenment, Judaism should provide genuine religious experiences, and the latter, the Kabbala reminds us, can only result from a "full-bodied sensuous embracing of reality."

Jewish mysticism's appreciation of the religious potential of man's "gross" or "fleshy" qualities is best exemplified in the Kabbala's consistent use of sexual imagery. The fact is that Jewish mysticism "sees love and the physical act of love as the great paradigm of religion," and defines all reality (both the hidden and the revealed) in terms "of the interplay between masculine and feminine." For illustrative purposes, the Kabbala's analysis of the Sabbath may be cited:

> [It] associate[s] evening with femininity, the mood of passive receiving. In the latter part of the Sabbath night, masculinity, the will to penetrate and know, begins to emerge; this is the time for the holy coupling, an act which takes place on an earthly level between man and wife, and concomitantly in the world of the *sefirot*. Sabbath morning is quite different; now it is the male element which predominates. The mood of the Sabbath morning is bright, outgoing; There is light, activity, and the study of the Law. Study, knowing, is a kind of male penetration, as in the biblical phrase 'And Adam knew Eve.' Late Sabbath afternoon is again different; union has taken place and the seed is deposited; what is left now is the essence of the experience—peaceful gratitude, lingering recollection, and soft longing. This is the atmosphere of the third and last meal of the Sabbath as the holy *chevraya* sit about the table with their teacher singing melodies of thanksgiving for the nearness of God which is sensed at this hour of grace.

This kind of erotic approach to religious life, Weiner contends, though open to misunderstanding and abuse, can be effectively used to make Judaism more attractive, particularly to the young. More importantly, it can add a vital new dimension to religious observances and celebrations by providing a "kind of inner psychic programming of rhythms and moods" appropriate to various occasions. Jewish mysticism, Weiner concludes, is fully cognizant of the fact that in order to have transforming power, ethical imperatives have to be combined with Eros.

As stated above, *9½ Mystics* is only an interim report on Rabbi Weiner's spiritual passage from modernity to post-modernity. One looks forward with keen interest and expectation to further installments describing other of his discoveries in Judaism's mystical orchard. Given the contemporary, post-modern climate of thought in America, it is safe to assume that an increasing number of Jews will be vitally interested in these discoveries.

DEPRECIATED DOZEN

THE SCREEN

It seems to me that making up a list of the ten best movies each year is critical boondoggling. The films on the lists, and especially at the top of them, are already popular. The critic has praised the films when they opened, and the public has gone to see them. As a service to a critic's readers, the lists are, at best, redundant. The real beneficiary of the lists is the distributor. The lists puff even more box-office life into the films that are already his hottest attractions. Meanwhile a great many other quality films go ignored or undistributed.

In lieu of a ten-best list I therefore offer below a list of 1970 releases whose merit has been rewarded with obscurity. They haven't all been mishandled by distributors with poor judgment. On the contrary, several of them wouldn't be available at all if it weren't for the enlightened practice of such small distributors as Daniel Talbot, the owner of the New Yorker theater, and Grove Press, which reinvested profits from *Curious (Yellow)* in a superb film festival. Films rescued by small distributors like these will usually be found making one-night stands on your local college campus. Most of the other films on the list are drowning in the flow of second features at your neighborhood theater (assuming you still have a neighborhood theater). But all these films are around and can be seen if a moviegoer is vigilant, or at least choosy.

Eric Till's *The Walking Stick* is a romance about two unexceptional people, a mediocre artist (David Hemmings) and a scholarly girl (Samantha Eggar). Till makes the film exceptional anyway by preserving the sentimentality of the script, but avoiding histrionics and meretricious camera work. He balances the love affair against a sensational art robbery in which the lovers become involved. His photography is inventive, yet restrained in a way that complements the love story instead of exaggerating it.

Ken Loach's *Kes* has had to endure commercial humiliation rather different from *The Walking Stick*'s. Unlike Till's film, which M-G-M released as a second feature at second-run theaters, *Kes* opened on a single bill in mid-town Manhattan. And when it hadn't broken records in a week, United Artists yanked it out of circulation. There's always a chance, however, that it will be granted a reprieve from this spiteful banishment.

The film is based on a Barry Hines novel entitled *Kestrel for a Knave*. Kestrels are falcons, and the knave is Billy, a teenager who catches and trains one of these fierce birds. The film's documentary approach throws

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the medieval adventure of falconry into sharp relief against a contemporary Yorkshire background. In contrast to the windhoving bird, life in the mining town of Barnsley, where Billy lives, seems to have a subterranean meanness. Many of the film's roles are played by Barnsley residents, including David Bradley who plays Billy. A shrivelled imp who looks old before his time, Bradley is perfectly cast as a boy who's never had *his* time.

It's difficult to pick and choose among the foreign films that Grove Press collected for its festival. But two of them—Glauber Rocha's *Antonio das Mortes* (Brazil) and Nico Papatakis' *Thanos and Despina* (Greece)—ought to be of special interest to Americans. It's hardly news that the overseas effect of Hollywood's lucrative movie export business has been a kind of neo-colonialism. Hollywood has for decades been the self-appointed missionary of the white capitalist's burden. But the way in which radical, young foreign directors are coping with this unwanted cultural heritage may hold a few surprises for American audiences.

In *Antonio das Mortes*, Brazilian folklore co-opts the Western when a gunslinger sides with the peasant revolt he's been hired to suppress. In *Thanos and Despina*, a down-and-out shepherd turns into an American-style gangster, and makes a rich girl into his moll. Both films fight an implicit campaign on two fronts—against foreign colonization and domestic military dictatorship. Both films will give you some new ideas on which way the wind is blowing.

Two foreign cultures also clash in James Ivory's *Bombay Talkie*. Or perhaps they're not so foreign after all. An Englishman who's now made three or four films in India, Ivory appreciates the aptness of calling Hollywood tycoons "Movie Moguls," as if they were reincarnations of India's ancient conquerors. In *Bombay Talkie*, East, in the person of an Indian movie star (Shashi Kapoor), meets West, in the person of an English authoress (Jenifer Kendal) who's just written a novel on Hollywood. She's seduced by all the mystical fakery of India, as he is by her neurotic (and equally fake) Western charm. Although the game is played on his home turf, she wins with a destructiveness befitting a representative of imperial powers.

If Ivory were an American, he'd work for National General Pictures. The halo of hard-core cynicism that glimmers over this young company's products makes it an inheritor of the Warner-Bros. style of the thirties. N.G. specializes in B-pictures with a bit of social consciousness and no tendency to be self-apologetic. Nor is there any reason to apologize for one of the company's 1970 releases: *The Grasshopper*. Directed by Jerry Paris and starring Jacqueline Bisset as a Las Vegas chorus girl, *The Grashopper* is a brassy, Americanized *Darling*. It's much better than its British predecessor, however, because it tears down some masculine mystiques instead of creating new feminine ones. It's tough stuff.

It seems appropriate to jump from American B-pictures to Godard. The 1960's were a golden age of filmmaking equal to the 20's, and Godard, the leading genius of the 60's, began his film career by studying American B-pictures. Godard's greatest film to date was made in 1966, but it wasn't premiered here until last summer when Dan Talbot acquired the American rights.

The film is *Two or Three Things I Know About Her*—"her' being both a Parisian housewife and the city of Paris itself. Godard feels that the city, like the middle-class woman in his film, is being turned into a whore. Although the title suggests some off-the-cuff opinions, the film is philosophically and cinematically Godard's most unified, complete work. *Wind from the East*, which premiered at last fall's New York Film Festival and is Godard's most recent film, isn't as good. But then Godard's failures are more interesting than most directors' successes. Godard isn't making films now: he's making political propaganda, and *Wind from the East* is the best product of this new vocation so far.

Christopher Miles' *The Virgin and the Gypsy* should be added to the list just because it's had to run in the shadow of *Women in Love*. Miles' film is a far more sensitive treatment of D. H. Lawrence's fiction than is the Ken Russell blockbuster. John Korty's *riverrun* also deserves mention, as does Gillo Pontecorvo's *Burn!* Neither of these two films panders to the film industry's pop-cult fantasies about youth and revolution. They're worth seeing for that reason alone. And so forth. These aren't the only noteworthy films that were eclipsed last year by the promotion budgets attached to lesser work. But I think these are at least worth taking a chance on, if you get a chance to do so. COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

SARAH VAN ALSTYNE ALLEN

PLEA FROM A READER

Do not feather me with words
Or try to capture me with song
As from some plumaged bird
Whose history is found
Only in legend ancient and remote,
Whose notes are wrought
From some synthetic gold.

Save for me words clean and pure and cold
As winter water broken by the spring
And let me find in this untroubled pool
The crystal core where in my echoed face
I find the shape of grace.

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EDWARD DAHLBERG—PARIAH

Up from a gallimaufry of ferine neologisms

SAUL MALOFF

EDWARD DAHLBERG is virtually unassimilable into any ordinary literary category, and partly for this reason, he has never in a long career commanded anything like a wide audience; has remained, not even a writer's but a critic's writer. A onetime novelist (*Bottom Dogs, From Flushing to Calvary*) who repudiated the form, he was never a critic or scholar as these terms are sanctioned where the definitions are made (the Academy); and certainly he has never turned his hand to any of the accessible and digestible subgenres. He has stood fast on his heavily-mortgaged marginal ground, like one of those demented old farmers pitchfork in hand against the insurance agents and sheriff's deputies, persisting through the years in his fanatical efforts to turn what anyone but he could see was a desert into some kind of garden; and he managed, God knows how, to cause some curious flowers to bloom there, flowers that eat flesh, can't be transplanted or cross-pollinate.

Dahlberg is not only a critic's writer, he is a critic's problem. The jeremiad is his characteristic tone—the tone he's as it were happiest with; his place and time are Middle America, New York, Europe in the '20s and '30s, the scene often the dark side of America; his principal subject, really his only one, is himself: his books are episodes in an unending quest for self-definition. Yet although some of his books, and parts of others, are autobiographical, episodic rather than systematic, they are forever veering toward legend and fable. His oeuvre on the whole takes himself as a created character named Edward Dahlberg and casts him as the mythic figure of the artist in America—as waif and seeker, injured and insulted, despised and rejected, scourge and executioner, Ishmael and Ahab, prophet and fool of God—an émigré internal and external.

In short, Dahlberg is a crank in a peculiarly American grain, a solitary who sets himself intransigently against all contemporary literary conventions and traditions, and rails against the mainstream and all its tributaries as they churn unheeding past. With rare exceptions—and the exceptions are the true innovators who prove retrospectively, and still more rarely in their own lifetime, to have created new conventions and founded traditions—the penalty when it is not simply obscurity, is relegation to a special fate; such a writer is more "respected," in an absent-minded way, than read—respected, if for no other reasons, for a thorny, unyielding "integrity," which may look like monomania.

The sticking point in Dahlberg's work is that old devil Style—a term that sounds fatuous these days, fit for the classroom, women's book clubs, and the columns of the provincial press. Yet in Dahlberg the style is the man, the man the style; and there is no possible way of avoiding that which clamors continuously for our attention. With Hemingway and Faulkner, to cite two obvious examples of distinctive stylists, whatever their idiosyncracies—the celebrated laconic manner of the former, the sometimes vertiginous convolutions of the latter—the style is based on the motherlode of plain speech. Dahlberg's on the other hand is "literary" in every sense, both high and invidious; and the language-stock, the word-hoard, along with the distinguishing rhetorical devices, are related to contemporary speech only by remote cousinship. The models are in the main Elizabethan and Seventeenth Century, with gleanings from other sources; the almost exclusive taste is for the arcane and recondite. Archaisms rumble across the page like coaches-and-four. Dahlberg, though formally educated (as schoolmasters say), writes like a man who has never heard English actually spoken, and who, supposing it is an extinct language, and loving it all the more for that reason, has undertaken to construct a usable language, viably literary though pretechnological, out of such works as one might once have found in the libraries of eccentric, bookish country gentlemen long since, alas, dead. Such a language will go jug-jug to dirty ears, but for certain purposes it may, dexterously employed, be superb; for preaching a thundering sermon on the sins of the flesh, say, in the latter case, and for rapid linear movement, swift narration of events and reckoning up the things of this world in the former. Fulmination is such fun; but apart from the pleasures of listening to a master of invective anathematize the forked beast's and the world's irredeemable vileness, how you feel about Dahlberg will depend finally on how his language registers on your ear.

In his seventieth year to heaven, Dahlberg has at last been celebrated (or victimized) in seemly fashion, by a *Festschrift*, the entire Fall, 1970 number of *TriQuarterly*, which contains the usual tributes along with some left-handed ones, and some clever critical overviews of his work along with the customary quantum of self-advertising masquerading as criticism. And here to crown the occasion is Dahlberg's *Con-*

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fessions (George Braziller, $6.50), a by-now familiar congeries of the author's singular virtues and maddening excesses. Despite the title, there is no scandal, or none that we don't already know; nor is the volume any more autobiographical than some others. Dahlberg; the myth has attained final form: the artist as exile, mad genius, solitary seeker, paranoiac; starving, scrofulous, lickerish—the literary pariah as hero, the autodidact "crazy about words." "I am," he says accurately, "my environment"; and we somehow accept as simple fact an utterance that would seem insufferably pompous in any other mouth: "Even as a novice I desired to personate the lonely mythic figures in literature, since man can only know himself as fable."

These being "confessions," there is something in the book of "venery" (one of the mildly outlandish words he dotes on); but the important transgressions against holy writ are not fleshly but artistic. Having renounced the naturalism of his early work as unclean, he lashes himself for another lapse from grace, this time for his Communist interlude during the Depression years. Whereas other men (forgetting the melodramatists storming against the God that failed) might simply score off the episode to their youth, or the times, or even—imagine!—look back with affection and perhaps a sense of loss at some lovely impulses since atrophied, Dahlberg laments the corruption of his style by CP literary dogmas. In the grand manner, here it is in Dahlberg's version. "Shame, according to Aristotle," he begins his account of his fall, "is a corporal sensation. I would drink the cup of Lethe to forget the scorifying thirties." And after acknowledging with rare simplicity that the "intelligentsia of America were powerfully stung by the suffering of the humble people," he recovers to proclaim, and these rolling periods must be savored in full: "Pondering this I became one of the innocent altar boys of the lowest divinity, Master. That such espousal of the New would turn me into a lotophagus I never conjectured. I endeavored to embrace the abstract mass-man, and renounced the 'worship of Hermes and the hilly Muses.' I adopted a gallimaufry of ferine neologisms and a drabbish language while abjuring the heroic English of former times. Worse, I held that the diction of the Elizabethans and the Restoration was obsolete." The "this" he is pondering in the above is this: "What the rich had not learned by sitting on the monetary delphic tripod they garnered from Joseph's shrewd dream, paraphrased by the medieval poet William Langland: the lean kine, Avarice, always in want, devour the fat kine. The workers who dress the earth, the vines, plow the tilth, labor at the lathes and the assembly lines, are themselves the manure of the politicians."

Dahlberg's Miracle

The point is not so much that a man can write this way, if he really puts his mind to it, but that a book, several books, a rather large number of books, an oeuvre—and an imposing one at that—can be composed of such a language at all. The language is not perfectly under control; it couldn't possibly be. But look at the problem. If you were determined to write in ancient Sumerian, you'd find the supply of sources in severely short supply; a few scraps of parchment, an odd inscription or two concerning commercial transactions, and several lexicons found in brass cylinders in the ruins of the Great Fire of 1666; undecipherable diction, queer syntax, dissonant rhythms of the Sumerian kind. The problem is not qualitatively different if your source is the OED. Try writing like Nashe, Burton, Browne, and see! Having renounced the errors of Modernism in all its forms, and taken to prophesying against moneychangers and scribes, Pharisees and Philistines, Dahlberg required a language appropriate to his purposes as Ezekiel's was to his—and did not so much evolve the one which marks him as the Cain of Letters as find it waiting for him in his own Qamram caves, which are somewhere to the Northwest or Southeast of Kansas City. And wonder to behold, it works! it works! In the desert God promised him a miracle if he would adhere, alone among men, to all the strictures of Torah; then, though he could not speak, the Lord would give him the gift of tongues. And it came to pass. And men marveled.

Let us content ourselves with a single example; take at random the Edmund Wilson contretemps. The occasion was Dahlberg's third novel, the anti-Nazi *Those Who Perish*, at a time when he was a "desperado, doing what I could to rid myself of scatophagous naturalism, morose jargon and debile metaphors." Wilson, hoping to help a friend in need, praised the book by comparing Dahlberg with Huysmans. Dahlberg is anything but amused. "Now I was *un homme de lettres!*" he remarks scornfully. "But was I? I was to abjure every book I ever wrote for the ideas of yesterday wax moldy before one has inhumed a sigh." All the same, since he esteemed Huysmans, he gracefully thanked Wilson, who, in all innocence, one supposes, replied he "had made the statement to advance the sale of my novel." Well!—to the wall with Wilson. "What wounds and rime gathered around my calcined spirit," Dahlberg incants. "Suddenly I realized that Edmund Wilson was Everyman's Opinion, and that he had no conceptions of his own that one cannot come by in twenty-five other drumbling critics. I mention the spurious panegyric," he goes on to explain, "because this is a common practice of the Grub Street littérateur, and I should also add and I don't care a whit about the novel. A man who will tell a lie about one book is sure to be false about another; this is the 'miching malicho,' the patchery, in our bookish agora."

But the end was not yet. Years later, finding himself in Boston, he visited Wilson in Wellfleet, where his host "made such pygmean assertions about literature," that his guest was compelled to admonish him thus: " 'Socrates opined that it is easy for a Greek to panegyrize the Athenians. You are

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SAUL MALOFF *is the author of* Happy Families *(Scribner's).*

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praising the driest sherds in our Sinai; let me show you where are the manna and the quail." That fool and knave Wilson took this as "a pachyderatous affront," and extended no further invitations, "preferring to guzzle and chatter with Frank Shay, Waldo Frank, Dos Passos and others of his bookish larvae." Well, what can you expect of a man who has "laureled . . . scrofulous hackneys." "Does a reader have to consult the Sibylline Oracles to interpret his title, *Classics and Commercials*, a whorehouse directory of stage dolts and scullion prosers . . . ?"

A dolt, scullion proser and scrofulous hackney myself, I find the fiasco wonderfully funny, weirdly delivered from what should have been slapstick by the crazy spiraling elevation of style and given a kind of tilting monumentality by it. It's still demented, but raised now to a forlorn splendor and nutty dignity. Take him all in all, Dahlberg is the first Comedian of our letters, a cast of one, a ragged, tattered but noble clown.

BOOKS

The megamachine reconstituted

The Pentagon of Power

LEWIS MUMFORD

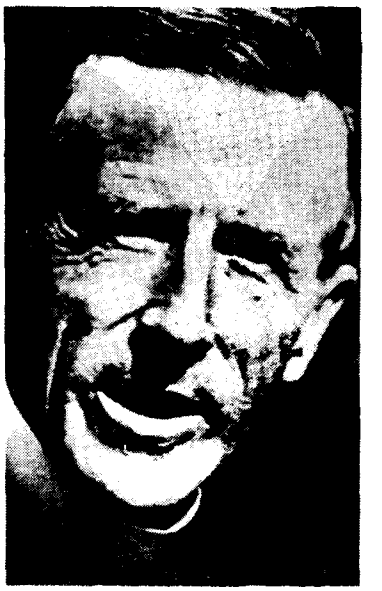
Harcourt Brace, $12.95

VICTOR C. FERKISS

For almost 50 years Lewis Mumford has been one of our most useful and distinguished social critics. It is therefore especially sad to have to report that his latest book, *The Pentagon of Power*, rather than being a fitting capstone for his career has little that is new or useful to offer us.

Mumford's principal strengths as a writer and thinker have been his broad interests and his literary skill. Under the influence of Scottish biologist Patrick Geddes, another brilliant and strong-minded polymath, Mumford became an ecological thinker half a century before the concept came into fashion. He was a wide-ranging critic of the basic assumptions of our technological society at a time when skepticism about the salvific powers of science and the machine was still largely the province of reactionaries and cranks. As intellectual and social historian, urbanologist and ethician, he has in a score of books enlarged our perceptions of what it means to be human. *The Myth of the Machine* (of which *The Pentagon of Power* is essentially a second volume) is in effect Mumford's attempt to sum up his intellectual life work. Its weakness, especially evident in the present volume, is that it is not so much a summary as a rehash of bits and pieces of his previous work, and insofar as it does set forth his views on where we are and how we got here, it only serves to underline his inability to tell us what to do now.

In *The Myth of the Machine* Mumford had two major concerns: to argue on anthropological grounds that man's technology did not constitute his humanity—that he was primarily a symbol-creating rather than a tool-making animal—and to describe how the megamachine—the combination of mechanized men and servile technology epitomized in the pyramids—had come into existence in the ancient world. Its sequel is primarily a description of how, after a relatively human medieval period, the megamachine was reconstituted by the rise of scientific philosophy and the power hunger of the nation-state. The book is full of interesting information and brilliant insights, and even lifelong readers of Mumford can expect to learn a good deal from it. But while the writing in individual sections and chapters is



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clear and cogent, the book as a whole does not really go anywhere. The problem is not simply loose organization or the author's tendency to repeat himself, but that Mumford cannot make the necessary leap from mere criticism to the prescriptions which his theme demands.

The basic source of Mumford's difficulty is that despite all his learning and acuteness he is not a systematic thinker. His life work hangs together because it is informed by a consistent point of view, a perspective. This is enough to enable him to operate as an historian or an architectural critic, to shed new light on old facts and to seek out new ones. He is for organic life over the machine, has been a pioneer in recognizing that biology not physics should be the paradigm of social explanation, has pointed up the connection between political power and cultural and environmental degradation. Mumford favors decentralization, eroticization and peace and sees global war as the apotheosis of the megamachine run amuck. He knows that something is fundamentally amiss with our civilization and says so well. But without a systematic theoretical and value framework Mumford cannot guide us out of the morass he so trenchantly describes.

For if Mumford is right, and he is on most accounts despite a growing tendency toward oversimplification and querulousness, we are on the eve of destruction. To escape we are going to have to make some difficult decisions, yet Mumford makes them seem easy—simply matters of life over death, good over evil. He recognizes, despite his own hyperbole, that technology is morally and socially neutral, but he does not tell us by what precise criteria and, even more importantly, by what social mechanisms we can evaluate and control it. After all his history and exhortation we are still left with the problems of what to do about the city, the nation-state, population, pollution, poverty and peace. He tells us what is wrong, but not how to set it right and leaves us feeling both distressed and impotent.

Mumford states that to outline the road to social renewal is beyond the power of a single mind, but one is led to suspect that this diffidence results from his being at heart a utopian in the sense that he discusses the good life outside of the context of social dynamics. His utopianism is nowhere more evident than in his attitude toward both youth and politics. He recognizes the counter-culture as a reaction against a decadent society, but he rejects it with the vehemence of an Agnew. Yet despite his rejection of the "youth culture" he shares much of Charles Reich's complacent optimism regarding the future—illogically so, since if youth cannot be relied on to save the future, who can?

Mumford's political naiveté is summed up in the book's last words when he writes that "the gates of the technological prison will open automatically . . . as soon as we choose to walk out." If by "we" he means all of humanity he is of course right. But can "we" act as one in this regard? Will the seven billion humans of the year 2000 give up a complex technology, pollution and prison if the alternative appears to be poverty or famine? What of the political and economic elites who have created and profited by the megamachine; will they permit us to walk out of their prison without a fight? Creating a humanized world society will require not only intellectual and spiritual enlightenment but hard choices and tight thinking. It will demand an economic and political revolution throughout the world, and not necessarily a uniformly non-violent one. Mumford deserves our respect for having led us up to the mountain top, but we will need new prophets, and warriors as well, to get to the promised land.

"I LOST MY JOB THROUGH THE NEW YORK TIMES (*editorial. September 10, 1968*): *'It is, of course, possible that as Senator representing the whole state Mr. Goodell may come to have a more sympathetic view of urban problems than he has had as Representative from an upstate district. That would be a strongly desirable evolution, especially if he hopes for re-election.'*"

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Celebration of Awareness: A Call for Institutional Revolution

IVAN ILLICH

Doubleday, $5.95

ED MARCINIAK

For more than twenty years, Ivan Illich has been an agent of change. As a parish priest in Spanish Harlem, a university educator in Puerto Rico, and the controversial director of Cuernavaca's renowned intercultural center, and through his magazine articles, lectures, and lengthy epistles to friends, he has sought to expose the "deceptions embodied in our institutions." Yet his call for institutional revolution turns out to be surprisingly tame. Religious and political leaders are asked "to face facts, rather than deal in illusions—to live change, rather than rely on engineering" and "to re-introduce the word 'celebration' into ordinary English."

In *Celebration of Awareness,* twelve of his articles and lectures have now become the book's twelve chapters. Each opens briefly with the circumstances surrounding its first appearance. Purposely, the original pieces were not updated because they were "written for the moment" and "constitute a point of view on a phenomenon of a time and should stand thus."

Thus the book exhibits an annoying tension. Is it an account of Illich's adventures as a radical reformer? Or is it a summary of his social thought and criticism? In fact, it is neither. As a presentation of Illich's views, for example, on education, change in underdeveloped countries, or the role of religious institutions in society, the book will disappoint, having already enkindled the reader's desire for a fuller treatment of Illich's ideas.

Nor does the book succeed as a chronicle of Illich's history-making interventions. The chapter "The Seamy

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Side of Charity" originally appeared in *America* magazine early in 1967. "It was deliberate timing," he explains. "I knew that at the end of that month three thousand churchmen—Catholic and Protestant, from the United States and Latin America—would meet in Boston to give new impetus to their programs," which, Illich was convinced, were designed to "help modernize the Latin American church along the lines of the North American model" and so "had to be stopped." Curiosity now demands satisfaction. What was the article's impact? Did his strategy succeed? What happened since? None of these questions is answered, tantalizing the reader.

The impact of North America on the social institutions of Latin America is the book's preoccupation. "The transfer of United States living standards and expectations could only impede," he says, "the revolutionary changes needed, and the use of the gospel in the service of capitalism or any other ideology was wrong." To men and women who plan to move into a society whose language is different from their own, he preaches service through the "eloquence of silence" and the virtues of listening and learning.

His theory of economic development calls for wider distribution of very limited resources. As foreign aid increases the technical hardware needed for health, education and transportation services, it decreases their availability to the masses of poor. To replace high-priced technologies that gobble up scarce economic resources, Illich proposes simple, low-cost systems of public health, adult education, and mass transportation and opposes any form of economic development which peddles aspirations for goods that are beyond the reach of the poor.

"Each car which Brazil puts on the road denies fifty people good transportation by bus," he says. "Each merchandized refrigerator reduces the chance of building a community freezer. Every dollar spent in Latin America on doctors and hospitals costs one hundred lives, to adopt a phrase of Jorge de Ahumada, the brilliant Chilean economist. Had each dollar been spent on providing safe drinking water, a hundred lives could have been saved. Each dollar spent on schooling [Illich's pejorative description of public education] means more privileges for the few at the cost of many; at best it increases the number of those who, before dropping out, have been taught that those who stay longer have earned the right to more power, wealth and prestige. What schooling does is to teach the schooled the superiority of the better schooled."

He reserves his grand critique for universal schooling, because it monopolizes unfairly a nation's educational resources on behalf of a minority. Few understand, as well as he does, the over-promises of education, the pretensions of privilege associated with years of schooling, and the dispirited future facing those who drop out. His criticism of the classroom is far more radical and sweeping than, for example, Charles Silberman's *Crisis in the Classroom.*

Latin American countries are committed to building more and more schools for children, many of whom will only spend a year or two in the classroom. Illich asks: Why not, instead make one or two months a year obligatory for *all* citizens below the age of thirty? Why not concentrate on the eradication of functional illiteracy: teach an adult how to build sanitary housing, activate his political consciousness, and encourage him as a parent to be responsible for his family's size and future?

But these alternatives to schooling are explored neither in detail nor in depth. Their consequences for children now in school—or their parents—are not evaluated. Ways to alter Latin American priorities in education are not suggested. In this book Illich is a far better critic than a social architect.

As teacher and agitator (in the finest sense), he has had a far greater impact upon the institutions which he scolds than the book indicates. The reader deserves more than a smattering of his social ideas and vision. In short, the book does not do Illich justice.

Self-Interviews

JAMES DICKEY

(Recorded & Edited by Barbara & James Reiss)
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MARGARET WIMSATT

When the aging Wordsworth described to Isabella Fenwick the circumstances of the composition of his poems, he was somewhat curtailed by the rate of her handwriting. Theodora Bosanquet, reminiscing about Henry James, had a typewriter and her memory. In Homer's day, there was no distinction between the bard and his work. But in these improved times, admiring students can invade a poet's roof-tree, armed with tape recorders, catch him in the very privacy of his vanity, and inveigle him into telling all. Mr. and Mrs. Reiss, in persuading

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James Dickey to unbutton himself, are sure that they have invented a new *genre*. Alas, with new tools they have dug up old foolishness, dead, one had hoped, with the demise of the Browning Society. The poet, too lazy or perhaps rightly too diffident to set down his General Ideas on the Universe, can be led to babble about them, and about his interesting personality and development, in his own living room. The electronic editors are not to be blamed entirely; they had help. Mr. Dickey, that woodsman, has fallen into their net, swallowed their bait, stopped their shot.

Mr. Dickey wears many hats. He thinks of himself as a poet, in spite of the success of his recent novel, *Deliverance*. As an occasional teacher, he must be interesting. As a book reviewer he is always, to the degree his sympathies allow, kindly, and as the author of several brief essays on poets and poetry, he is lucid. In "The Poet Turns on Himself," included in the collection *Babel to Byzantium*, he has written about his own formation as a poet: what he tried to do, the techniques he invented, what he hoped to do in the future. He defends himself from the charge of being a systematic critic and abjures all systems. He looks into his heart and works. And when the milieu and the heart agree, he gives us splendid poems: "In the Tree House," "Hunting Civil War Relics at Nimblewood Creek," "For the Last Wolverine," are among those I like best. One associates him with that last heart of the old American darkness, the hinterlands of the South-East, along the short fast rivers with the strange names, and readers of *Deliverance* alone would not know he had other countries, but he has: countries of war, the sky at night through the bomber's porthole, of old kings' ghosts at Dover, and the country of the mind always trying to assimilate to itself time and pain. He is a good poet, and has created his own voice.

So one hates to see this happen. Explaining his own poems, however tentatively, he refutes his editors' thesis by writing or speaking hogwash. What came across, he explicates away. "Adultery," for instance, is a successful poem, leading strongly to its last line: "Guilt is magical." But the author's *post hoc* reflections on the sexual dilemma are puerile: "If there were any justice in the world, things wouldn't be that way. But there *isn't* any justice in the world in that sense, and things *are* that way." (Italics his.) The sunburned lovers in "Sun" stand better without the Dantean implication being spelled out. "The Sheep Child" is a poem of twisted vision, and we are not comforted by the author's assurance: "I intended no blasphemy or obscenity by this poem at all." It either is or is not blasphemous and obscene. "Coming Back to America," a good slight poem, is not helped by his asserting that this is the way it really happened.

It would be easy, but embarrassing, to multiply these examples. Easy also to cite the wordiness, the redundancies, the editors should have edited out. One would like to look instead at what Mr. Dickey does and says right. Whatever dignity this book has comes from the excellence of the author's ear; though ill-served by the recording process, he thinks in periodic English. And he stands firmly for the poet's autonomy, his right to speak on what interests him, to avoid the Stalinism implicit in such a volume as *Of Poetry and Power*, official poems commemorating John Kennedy. "The official response is the very death of poetry." One wishes only that the positive insights in the book were more mature. Dickey responds vividly to animals, especially those that are hunted, to athletes, to music that

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REVIEWERS

VICTOR C. FERKISS, Professor of Government at Georgetown, is the author of *Technological Man: The Myth and the Reality* (Braziller).

ED MARCINIAK, deputy commissioner in the Dept. of Development and Planning and former director of the Commission on Human Relations in Chicago, is author of *Tomorrow's Christian*.

MARGARET WIMSATT is a housewife living in New Haven, Conn.

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can be encompassed by the guitar. (His admiration of the instinctual contradicts his own story of how hard he, a man, worked at hammering out a poetic line that would say what he wanted it to say.) His sense of the aliveness of words, of their demanding presences, has brought him his success. He was born with an ear. Now one hopes that he will move on to a more philosophic understanding of the universe as he recrafts his poetic form, so that he will no longer say, or be trapped into saying: "I've always felt that God and I have a very good understanding"—because such unorganized thinking leads him to: "Whatever made this universe, even if it's nothing but blind force, should be worshipped."

No, Mr. Dickey, No. Keep those children out of your house, however much they admire it and you and your wife's sandwiches. After all, they are so unperceptive as to connect your admiration of rivers with the problem of pollution in the Potomac. They are the priests of the oldest gods, Mammon and Moloch, and they have served you up, an unresisting sacrifice.

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 483)

church and that therefore, any Christian can officiate at a Eucharist or act as God's agent in the forgiveness of sins.

From more and more places across our country, from San Diego to Springfield, Massachusetts, I hear of individuals and groups who celebrate a Eucharist in their own families and with their friends, without any bishop-ordained priest and possibly without what he would consider a Spirit-ordained priest. They are coming to realize that the important thing in the Eucharist is that it is a memorial of Jesus, that the question of what happens to the bread and wine is mostly irrelevant, that the real issue is what happens to the people who partake of it. Does it in some way change their lives? Does it strengthen them?

Prayers and services of reconciliation and forgiveness are taking place far away from the ordained priest. People in the charismatic renewal ask God for his Holy Spirit and rise up praying in tongues, seeing visions, healing the sick, and preaching the Gospel, all without benefit of a bishop. Meanwhile, bishops go through the ritual of confirmation, and those who receive it show no evidence of change. Which seems closer to what Christ did with his Apostles as described in the Book of Acts and in the last verse of St. Mark's Gospel?

Yes, this does have great implications for seminary training, for clerical titles, for church structure at all levels. Perhaps the greatest implication is that instead of a few thousand priests who were supposed to be God's ministers to man, we might have sixty million in America alone because every Catholic would then realize that he or she had a personal obligation to *act*, to bring Christ's saving message to others, to help reconcile men to God, to encourage the eucharistic memorial of Christ, to preach and to heal wounds of all types. No longer could the burdens of priesthood be casually delegated to a few ordained priests only.

Isn't it time now to face these questions? Perhaps many clergy who have come to rely on their special prerogatives, titles, Roman collar, etc., will be badly shaken up and may even lose their sense of personal identity at the thought that they have no power that every parishioner does not share equally, but if this is the historical and theological truth, should it not be brought into the open and faced? Rather than crippling a few, it should free the many.

JOHN P. TERNES

Hellish Theologies

Los Alamos, N.M.

To the Editors: Joseph E. Kokjohn's "A Hell of a Question" [Jan. 15] should have been subtitled "With a Hell of an Answer." While it proved enjoyable and informative, it likewise reflected serious theological oversights and misinterpretations.

Unexplainedly, the author makes no reference to I Cor. 15: 12-17, one of the most pivotal Pauline passages on resurrection of the dead and which seems to indicate (as Pannenberg has so well pointed out in *Jesus—God and Man*, pp. 74-88) that immortality *is* a premise as well as a promise. Likewise, the author's usage of the terms "nonexistence" and "nonbeing" in reference to those "who deny and withdraw from the divine plan" proved to be philosophically baffling and "nonacceptable." He affirms quite accurately that only twice in the NT does the word immortality occur; the words "nonexistence" and "nonbeing", on the other hand, never appear, and to read them back into the texts as being the real meaning is a hazardous process. *Gratis assertur, gratis negatur.* Furthermore, no serious exegete or scripture scholar would equate "destruction" and "annihilation" with "nonexistence."

Finally, the doctrine of creation, of God's communication of his love that it brings existence for all things and persons and continues them in existence —whether or not they acknowledge their dependence on him—has a key role to play in any serious consideration of hell and an afterlife.

(REV.) SPENCER STOPA

Reply

Davenport, Ia.

Father Spencer Stopa's objections to my article are well received because I believe in a plurality of theologies and would not expect total agreement. However, I do note that he says I Cor. 15: 12-17 "*seems* to indicate . . . that immortality *is* a premise as well as a promise." We might not be too divided in our disagreement.

The words "serious theological oversights and misinterpretations" and "no serious exegete or scripture scholar" are unfortunate phrases to use. The manuscript was read and then revised under the supervision of two serious scholars who hold doctorates in Scripture from Rome.

Nevertheless, let's continue to have friendly disagreements in our search for truth. (REV.) JOSEPH E. KOKJOHN

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